



ROBB KAHL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Rep. Robb Kahl Introduces Legislation to Index Gas Tax

Unlike prior indexing, Joint Committee on Finance Will Approve or Reject Increases

(MADISON) State Representative Robb Kahl (D-Monona) is introducing legislation to restore the indexing of the gas tax beginning on May 1, 2017. Any increase in the tax would go into effect only if the Joint Committee on Finance either approves the increase or takes no action. The Joint Finance Committee, by vote, could prevent an increase from going into effect.

"Over the last couple weeks, Wisconsinites have received troubling news regarding our state's transportation infrastructure," Kahl noted. "The Wisconsin DOT just announced that several major road projects across our state are being delayed by at least two years including two impacting my district, the Verona Road reconstruction project and I-39/90 from Beloit to Madison. More bad news on other projects is sure to come very soon."

"The delay in these projects is caused by one thing: a lack of political will to make the needed investments in Wisconsin's aging transportation infrastructure," Kahl stated. "It is time we as elected officials do our job which includes not just financing infrastructure investment but actually funding it. Instead of properly funding our transportation needs, Wisconsin's elected leadership has continued to cut funding, and the limited investment that has been approved is being paid for with an unsustainable credit card approach."

If we have a well maintained and quality infrastructure, we're more likely to attract private business investment and grow our economy while making our roads safer for all. However, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Wisconsin has the third-worst roads in the nation, with 71 percent of roads in poor or mediocre condition, and 1,970 structurally deficient or functionally obsolete bridges.

Wisconsin has the lowest cost in the Midwest for motorists to own and operate a car when considering gas taxes, tolls, vehicle registration fees and other government fees and taxes. Had indexing not been repealed, the price of gas today in Wisconsin would be \$2.36 a gallon, instead of where it is now at \$2.30. However, even at \$2.36 per gallon, Wisconsin would retain its position as the lowest cost state to own and operate a car in the Midwest. While additional action is needed to address our immediate and long-term transportation funding shortfall, restoration of indexing is an important first step in helping to ensure that we will have a strong infrastructure in the future without having to pay for it solely with the state's credit card.

"We need to stop burdening our children with debt to pay for roads they will personally never drive on. This is a fiscally responsible course of action to help support the long-term funding of our transportation infrastructure, which will in turn help grow Wisconsin's economy" Kahl concluded.

Robb Kahl (D-Monona) is the State Representative for the 47th Assembly District. He is the Ranking Democratic Member on the Assembly Transportation Committee and a member of the State Building Commission.

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